

Minutes

MEETING OF BOARD OF INSPECTORS FOR THE POTTER COUNTY JAIL Sept. 5, 2025; noon; Gunzburger Building - Auditorium

CALL TO ORDER - Paul Heimel, Chair

MOMENT OF SILENCE/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL Members Stephen Minor, Kevin Siska, Andy Watson, Paul Heimel, Nancy Grupp, Robert Rossman; present. Deputy Warden Ricky Hurler and Administrator Jessica Giebel; present.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - *(limited to 3 minutes per person)*

MINUTES – Aug. 8, 2025 (will be presented for approval at Oct. 3 meeting)

GUESTS:

Commissioner Heimel introduced Pastor Tom Shatto from the Galeton Area Ministerium, who presented a detailed report on the organization's jail ministry services, which range from providing needed items for those who being released, to weekly Bible study and life skills counseling. The long-term goals are to help inmates make wise choices and to build relationships with them. Galeton Ministerium has also contributed \$2,000 toward the jail ministry, with \$450 remaining, which will be used for additional library materials. District Attorney Watson noted that he has received letters of appreciation regarding these services.

REPORT FROM WARDEN/DEPUTY

- There are currently 26 inmates, including two on work release, and three females in other facilities.
- Some 14 inmates are on medication. One is receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment and seven are receiving tele-psychiatry services.
- It was noted that inmates have multiple opportunities throughout the week to participate in programs. Mondays feature a Bible study class led by volunteer Phil Vaughn; Tuesdays include recovery and AA sessions; on Wednesdays Jay Caldwell leads a class; Crystal Thomas from Potter County Human Services/Drug and Alcohol Services leads a journaling group on Thursdays; meetings with the Galeton Ministerium are on Fridays.
- Corrections Officers will be completing suicide prevention and Narcan training, while Deputy Warden Hurler will be attending two supervisory training sessions.

RE-ENTRY SERVICES/STEPPING UP UPDATE – Thomas Patterson, Kayla Wright, and Crystal Thomas from Potter County Human Services

T. Patterson reported that a Pa. Stepping Up Technical Assistance Center representative has offered to assist with on-site data collection to better identify inmate needs and track outcomes. K. Wright provided an overview of the most recent Re-entry Coalition meeting, noting that the goal is to support individuals as they seek second chances with housing and employment opportunities. C. Thomas presented an overview of current jail services, including weekly visits from a certified recovery support specialist through Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services Inc., as well as case management services and assessments. An eight-week evidence-based journaling program is also offered. T. Patterson also shared the positive impact that the recently opened Potter County Recovery and Resource Center at the Gunzburger Building has had on some of those who have returned to society.

OLD BUSINESS –

Acquisition of additional computer tablets – Encartele has offered to provide 15 additional tablets at no cost, under the same billing system that is in place for tablets already in service. R. Rossman moved to approve; S. Minor seconded. P. Heimel expressed concern about the high data service rates that are charged by the provider, who returns a portion of profits to the county. Vote: R. Rossman, S. Minor, A. Watson, N. Grupp, K. Siska, all in favor; P. Heimel, opposed. Motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS –

Purchase of Protective Glove (Generated Low-Output Voltage Emitter). – Deputy Warden Hurler requested permission to purchase two of the devices, which would provide officers a safe way to control inmate compliance. Funds from the Technology Fund created by proceeds from Encartele’s billing for computer services would be used. R. Rossman moved to approve; K. Siska seconded; all in favor.

GENERAL DISCUSSION - *(issues, concerns, suggestions by members)*

P. Heimel raised concerns about staffing shortages that had resulted in family/friend visitation sessions being cancelled. Deputy Warden Hurler confirmed that he has not been able to fill all three shifts with a full complement of officers, resulting in lockdowns. He suggested that creating two additional full-time positions with benefits may be more effective than continuing to maintain five currently unfilled part-time positions. Hurler noted that the staffing shortage is leading to excessive overtime and double shifts, which has increased expenses and caused officer fatigue. N. Grupp moved to recommend to the Potter County Salary Board that two additional full-time positions be added to the complement; R. Rossman seconded; all in favor.

NEXT MEETING – Oct. 3, 2025

ADJOURNMENT R. Rossman motioned to adjourn; K. Siska seconded; all in favor.